

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

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R 250415Z NOV 74

FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2445

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMCONSUL PERTH BY POUCH

AMCONSUL BRISBANE BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY PARIS

MUSNATO BRUSSELS 01

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: ,/A

TAGS: PINT, ENRG, PORG, AS

SUBJECT: MENZIES' VIEWS ON AUSTRALIA AND CURRENT WORLD SITUATION

1. SUMMARY:

I CALLED ON SIR ROBERT MENZIES, GRAND OLD MAN OF AUSTRALIAN POLITICS, ON NOVEMBER 20, AND DISCUSSED A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS WITH HIM FOR NEARLY AN HOUR. I HAD NOT SEEN SIR ROBERT SINCE 1960, AND WAS PLEASED TO FIND HIM ALERT, AMUSING, THOUGHTFUL, AND PERVEPTIVE DESPITE THE STROKE WHICH PARALYZED HIS LEGS SOME YEARS AGP. HE IS VIBIBLY IMPATIENT WITH HIS PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS AND MOST ANNOYED THAT HE CANNOT STILL DIRECT THE LIBERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PARTY, ABOUT WHOSE PRESENT LEADERSHIP HE WAS LESS THAN COMPLIMENTARY. HIS JUDGEMENTS AND OPINIONS ARE STILL SOUGHT BY THE LIBERAL HIERARCHY, AND I INTEND TO VISIT WITH HIM ON A REGULAR BASIS. END SUMMARY.

2. I CONGRATULATED SIR ROBERT ON HIS SPEECH OF LAST JULY ON BEING GIVEN THE FREEDOM OF THE MELBOURNE SUBURB OF KEW (MELBOURNE 992). HE SAID THAT THE INCOMPETENCE OF THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT AND ITS FAILURE TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP FOR AUSTRALIA ARE NOW PERFECTLY CLEAR TO EVERYONE. THE RECENT REVERSALS OF LABOR POLICIES ON TAXES, CREDITS, RESOURCES, FOREIGN INVESTMENT, FOREIGN TRADE AND THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR HAVE DIS-CREDITED LABOR'S FOOLISH THEORIES AND INDECISIVE LEADERSHIP. BUT THE LIBERAL PARTY'S LEADERSHIP IS NOT OF A CALIBER TO TAKE PROPER ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION. AUSTRALIA IS IN A MESS, AND HE WISHES HE WERE TEN YEARS YOUNGER. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE HAD PROBABLY BEEN AT FAULT FOR REMAINING PRIME MINISTER TOO LONG. HE WAS STILL TRYING TO HELP BEHIND THE SCENES WITH ADVICE; BUT THE LIBERALS DID NOT REACT RAPIDLY AND CLEVERLY ENOUGH TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPENINGS WHICH LABOR MISMANAGEMENT GAVE THEM.

3. SIR ROBERT STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF U.S. LEADERSHIP IN THE PRESENT DANGEROUS STATE OF THE WORLD. THE ARABS ARE PROBLEMS BUT THEY ARE INCAPABLE OF EXERTING ANY POSITIVE FORCE.

THE U.K. IS FEEBLE AND PALSIED AND THE REST OF EUROPE CONFUSED. JAPAN IS VULNERABLE TO THE ENERGY CRISIS TOO, AND ONLY STRONG INTELLIGENT U.S. LEADERSHIP CAN SAVE THE PRESENT WORLD SITUATION. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES IT WAS RIDICULOUS FOR THE LABOR LEFT IN AUSTRALIA TO PRETEND THAT NEW FOREIGN POLICIES WERE POSSIBLE. HE WAS ANXIOUS TO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE U.S. TO AUSTRALIA AND ALSO TO ATONE IN SOME WAY FOR THE RIDICULOUS TREATMENT WHICH THE LABOR LEFT, ESPECIALLY "THAT MAN BROWN" (FEDERAL SENATOR WILLIAM BROWN, LABOR, VICTORIA) HAD GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR GREEN LAST JUNE AND JULY. THEREFORE HE HAD ARRANGED THAT THE AMBASSADOR BE INVITED TO SPEAK TO THE MELBOURNE SCOTS AT THEIR ANNUAL ST. ANDREWS DAY DINNER NOVEMBER 30, IN ORDER TO SHOW MELBOURNE'S APPRECIATION TO THE AMBASSADOR AND ITS REJECTION OF SENATOR BROWN. HE FEELS THAT CLOSE COORDINATION AND COOPERATION BETWEEN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES IS ESSENTIAL TO FACE CURRENT WORLD PROBLEMS. THE US, UK, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND CANADA
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FORM A NATURAL GROUP WITHIN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, AND MUST WORK PARTICULARLY CLOSELY TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE SENSIBLE COMMON POLICIES. IN THIS SITUATION THE LABOR GOVERNMENT'S ERRATIC FOREIGN POLICY MOVES MAKE AUSTRALIA'S ROLE UNCLEAR AT A TIME OF GREAT PERIL TO THE WORLD. AUSTRALIA NEEDS THE US, BUT THE US NEEDS FRIENDS TOO; AND ALTHOUGH THOSE FRIENDS MAY BE SMALLER POWERS, HE CONTINUED, THEY ARE IMPORTANT TO SUCCESSFUL US POLICIES. STABLE, CONSISTENT US POLICIES ARE ESSENTIAL AND CLOSE COLLABORATION MUST BE MAINTAINED. THE APPOINTMENT OF A SEASONED PROFESSIONAL LIKE AMBASSADOR GREEN TO CANBERRA WAS A VERY WELCOME PROOF THAT THE US REALIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF CLEAR, CONSISTENT LEADERSHIP AND OF CLOSE RELATIONS WITH ITS FRIENDS AND WAS VERY REASSURING.

4. SIR ROBERT ASKED ME TO COME BACK REGULARLY; HE WOULD SEE
TO IT THAT WE STAYED IN TOUCH.
BRAND

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